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ABSTRACT

An important focus of developmental research has centered upon the role of parents in the emotional-psychological development of children and adolescents. During the past 25 years a sizable body of empirical evidence on these socialization processes has emerged. In this study the relation of parents' hostility to the self-esteem of older adolescents was investigated. College students (N=125) and both parents of each student participated. Students responded to questionnaires measuring self-concept and self-monitoring, while parents completed the Hostility (Ho) Scale of the Cook-Medley Hostility Scale. Results indicated mothers' and fathers' hostility was correlated with their adolescents' self-esteem. Mothers' hostility was more strongly correlated (inversely) to sons' self-esteem, whereas fathers' hostility was more strongly correlated (inversely) to daughters' self-esteem. Adolescent Other-directedness had strong cognitive moderator effects, increasing the deleterious effects of fathers' hostility upon adolescents' self-esteem. These findings suggest that Ho may be a cognitive construct. (ABL)

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Other-Directedness: Moderating Resilience During Adolescence

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Abstract: *Mothers' and fathers' hostility [measured by the Cook-Medley (1945) Hostility Scale] were correlated with their adolescents' self-esteem. Mothers' hostility was more strongly related (inversely) to sons' self-esteem, whereas fathers' hostility was more strongly related (inversely) to daughters' self-esteem. Adolescent Other-directedness had strong cognitive moderator effects, increasing the deleterious effects of fathers' hostility upon adolescents' self-esteem.*

An important focus of developmental research has centered upon the role of parents in the emotional-psychological development of children and adolescents, and during the past 25 years a sizable body of empirical evidence on these socialization processes has emerged (e.g., Berns, 1989; Maccoby & Martin, 1983; Martin, 1975; Rollins & Thomas, 1979). However, as numerous authors have pointed out (see Sigel, 1985), there is a dearth

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of information regarding those parental beliefs, attitudes, and cognitions which affect emotional-psychological development. It is assumed that particular cognitive constructs mediate the responses of parents to their children, but little is presently known about which specific cognitions are associated with varying childrearing practices.

One potential avenue of research in this area derives from recent studies in which the MMPI-based Cook and Medley (1954) Hostility (Ho) Scale has been used. Earlier studies employing this scale had implicated Ho in cardiovascular health problems in men (e.g., Barefoot, Dahlstrom, & Williams, 1983; Shekelle, Gale, Ostfeld, & Paul, 1983; Williams, Haney, Lee, Kong, Blumenthal, & Whalen, 1980) and in general mortality rates among men (e.g., Barefoot et al., 1983; Barefoot, Dodge, Peterson, Dahlstrom, & Williams, 1989; Shekelle et al., 1983). In an effort to explicate the processes involved in this relationship between Ho and health, more recent studies have focused on the cognitive and behavioral correlates of this hostility measure. These research efforts have revealed that when compared to participants who scored low in Ho, high Ho individuals were more suspicious of others, they were more anger-prone, and they had more frequent experiences of irritability (e.g., Hardy & Smith, 1988; Smith & Frohm, 1985; Suarez & Williams, 1989). Furthermore, when placed in circumstances of interpersonal conflict, these high Ho individuals displayed more anger, they exhibited more hostile behavior, and they were more disparaging in their attributions of others (e.g., Hardy & Smith, 1988; Pope, Smith, & Rhodewalt, 1990; Smith, Sanders, & Alexander, 1990). Together these studies suggest that Ho may be a robust psychological disposition with pervasive

effects upon interpersonal functioning.

The role of authority in parent-child interactions has been a principal variable of interest in familial research, and repeatedly it has been reported that hostile, irritable, and aggressive patterns of parental authority have deleterious consequences for emotional-psychological development in general (see Becker, 1964; Maccoby, 1980; Patterson, 1982; Steinmetz, 1979) and for self-esteem (SE) development in particular (e.g., Bachman, 1982; Baumrind, 1971; Rohner, 1986). In the present study, the relation of parents' Ho to the SE of older adolescents was investigated. Given the increased opportunity for parent-child conflict which is typical of the adolescent years, it is hypothesized that parents' Ho is inversely related to adolescents' SE. Post hoc investigations of the relationships of Barefoot et al.'s (1989) Ho subset factors (i.e., Cynicism, Hostile Attributions, Hostile Affect, and Aggressive Responding) for both mothers and fathers to SE of sons and daughters were also completed in the present study.

A further investigative area of interest in the present study has been prompted by the fact that while several childrearing practices have been clearly implicated in emotional-psychological development, some adolescents seem to "defy" these empirical findings. In other words, some adolescents exhibit healthy functioning along several dimensions of emotional and psychological development despite adverse familial circumstances. While several researchers (e.g., Anthony, 1974; Felsman, 1989; Garmezy, 1981; Garmezy, Masters, & Tellegen, 1984) have investigated various cognitive skills and personality factors (e.g., intellectual competence, locus of

control, field independence, the capacity to delay gratification) in such "resilient" adolescents, there is a need for further understanding of those cognitive systems that may serve to moderate the actual processing and interpretation of parents' behaviors by such adolescents. As Baumrind (1991) recently stated:

> [T]he manner in which the child encodes or represents the parenting behavior may change the effects of the parenting behavior on adolescents.... Thus depending upon how the parents' behavior is construed by the child, the same parenting behavior could have different effects due to the cognitive activity of the child" (p. 157).

In the present study, we measured the adolescent participants' Other-directedness, a factor derived by Briggs, Cheek, and Buss (1980) from Synder's (1974, 1987) Self-Monitoring Scale. Given the fact that high Other-directedness is associated with a heightened sensitivity to the behavioral and emotional cues provided by others, we are predicting an especially robust inverse relation between parental Ho and SE for those adolescents who function cognitively in a high Other-directedness manner.

Method

Subjects

The participation of 231 college students (as part of an introductory psychology course requirement) and both their parents (through mailed questionnaires) was solicited. Fifty-four subjects were eliminated from the study because their parents were divorced or separated. An additional 52 students were eliminated because at least one of their parents declined the opportunity to participate. A total of 125 students (66 women, 59 men)

and both their parents (71% of the intact families) participated through questionnaire responses.

Materials and Procedure

Each college-age participant completed three questionnaires that were presented in randomized order: (a) the Tennessee Self-Concept Scale (TSCS; Fitts, 1965), (b) Synder's (1974, 1987) Self-Monitoring Scale (from which an Other-directedness score was derived), and (c) a demographic information sheet. Each parent was asked to complete the Cook and Medley (1954) Ho Scale.

Each of the research participants was told that we were investigating factors that are believed to influence SE in adolescents. They were instructed that there were no right or wrong answers and that all of their responses were anonymous; therefore they were encouraged to respond to each item as honestly as possible. They were also instructed not to spend too much time on any one item since we were interested in their first reaction to each statement. They were also reminded of the importance of responding to every item on the questionnaires.

Self-esteem. Each of the adolescent participants completed the TSCS, which consists of 100 self-descriptive statements to which participants responded on a 5-point scale ranging from *completely false* of me (1) to *completely true* of me (5). The Total Score was computed for each participant. Fitts (1965) operationalized this Total Score as indicative of individuals who "like themselves, feel that they are persons of value and worth, have confidence in themselves, and act accordingly" (p. 2). Fitts reported a test-retest reliability for this score of r = .92. An internal

consistency estimate of .92 for the Total Score was reported by Stanwyck and Garrison (1982); also Roid and Fitts (1988) reported a coefficient alpha value of .94 for the Total Score scale.

Other-directedness. Each of the adolescent participants also completed Synder's (1974, 1987) Self-Monitoring Scale. For the present study only the responses to the 11 true-false items designated by the factor-analytic work of Briggs et al. (1980) as measuring an Other-directedness factor were employed. Other-directedness items are related to an individual's sensitivity to and use of situational cues in the regulation of self-presentational behaviors. Examples of Other-directedness items are: "In order to get along and be liked, I tend to be what people expect me to be rather than anything else" and "When I am uncertain how to act in social situations, I look to the behavior of others for cues." Briggs et al. reported an alpha coefficient of .72 for this Other-directedness factor.

Demographic information. The student participants also provided information concerning (a) their gender, (b) their age, (c) whether one of their parents had died, and (d) whether their parents were divorced or separated.

Hostility. Copies of the Ho Scale (Cook & Medley, 1954) were mailed home to each of the parents along with a letter explaining the research project and soliciting their participation. A stamped envelope for convenience in returning the completed questionnaires was also included with the questionnaires and the letter.

The Ho Scale consists of 50 items from the MMPI. This scale was

originally constructed to discriminate teacher rapport with students. Cook and Medley reported an internal consistency of .86. More recently, Smith and Frohm (1985) reported an alpha coefficient of .82. Test-retest reliabilities reported by Barefoot et al. (1983) and Shekelle et al. (1983) were both approximately r = .85.

In an attempt to better understand the construct measured by the Ho Scale, Barefoot et al. (1989) subjected the Ho items to analyses of the item content by several judges. These a priori classifications resulted in six item subsets: Cynicism, Hostile Attributions, Hostile Affect, Aggressive Responding, Social Avoidance, and Other. Barefoot et al. presented evidence suggesting that the Social Avoidance and the Other factors are likely measuring constructs other than hostility; therefore only the Cynicism, Hostile Attributions, Hostile Affect, and Aggressive Responding factors (along with the total Ho score) were used in the present analyses.

Results

The bivariate correlations of Mothers' and Fathers' Ho and Ho subset factors to SE for all participants combined, for females, and for males are presented in Table 1. Neither Mothers' Ho nor any of the Mothers' Ho subset factors were significantly related to SE for all the participants combined or for daughters' data analyzed separately. However, the following three Mothers' Ho subset factors were related to sons' SE: Mothers' Cynicism (r = -.250, p < .025), Mothers' Hostile Affect (r = -.224, p < .05), and Mothers' Aggressive Responding (r = -.237, p < .05). For the Fathers' Ho variables, overall Ho (r = -.208, p < .025) and the Cynicism subset factor (r = -.240, p < .01) were related to SE for all participants combined; these

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Table 1

Bivariate Correlations of Adolescents' Self-Esteem (SE) With Mothers' and Fathers' Hostility (Ho) and Ho Subset Factors

Independent variables	SE (All, N = 125)	SE (Women, n=66)	SE (Men, n = 59)
Mothers' Ho	-.076	.001	-.166
Mothers' Cynicism	-.140	-.048	-.250, p<.025
Mothers' Hostile Attributions	-.058	-.102	-.012
Mothers' Hostile Affect	-.106	.001	-.224, p<.05
Mothers' Aggressive Responding	-.041	.118	-.237, p<.05
Fathers' Ho	-.208, p<.025	-.220, p<.05	-.206, p<.05
Fathers' Cynicism	-.240, p<.01	-.320, p<.01	-.143
Fathers' Hostile Attributions	-.150	-.132	-.188
Fathers' Hostile Affect	-.077	-.043	-.122
Fathers' Aggressive Responding	.032	.144	-.112

same two variables were also significantly related to SE for daughters (r = -.220, p < .05 and r = -.320, p < .01, respectively). For the sons' data, only Fathers' Ho was related to SE (r = -.206, p < .05).

Moderated regression analyses were completed for all participants combined and for the subjects of each gender separately, and the results of these analyses are summarized in Table 2. In moderated regression analyses, the dependent variable (i.e., SE in the present study) is first regressed on the predictor variable (i.e., the predictor variables here are Ho and the Ho subset factors), then on the moderator variable (i.e., Other-directed-

Table 2

Increments in R^2 for Self-Esteem Variance, F Values, and Probability Levels for Each Predictor Variable X Other-Directedness Interaction

Predictor variables	$R^2\Delta$ (All, N = 125)	F	p	$R^2\Delta$ (Women, n=66)	F	p	$R^2\Delta$ (Men, n = 59)	F	p
Mothers' Ho	.014	1.81	*ns*	.005	0.35	*ns*	.016	0.92	*ns*
Mothers' Cynicism	.032	4.19	<.05	.032	2.39	*ns*	.028	1.71	*ns*
Mothers' Hostile Attributions	.003	0.42	*ns*	.002	0.16	*ns*	.000	0.02	*ns*
Mothers' Hostile Affect	.001	0.07	*ns*	.004	0.31	*ns*	.004	0.24	*ns*
Mothers' Aggressive Responding	.01	1.24	*ns*	.006	0.43	*ns*	.055	3.38	*ns*
Fathers' Ho	.074	10.56	<.005	.038	2.91	*ns*	.123	8.12	<.01
Fathers' Cynicism	.069	9.76	<.005	.025	1.99	*ns*	.137	8.97	<.01
Fathers' Hostile Attributions	.074	10.25	<.005	.070	5.45	<.025	.045	2.68	*ns*
Fathers' Hostile Affect	.027	3.56	*ns*	.002	0.17	*ns*	.126	8.05	<.01
Fathers' Aggressive Responding	.003	0.36	*ns*	.017	1.27	*ns*	.068	4.09	<.05

ness), and finally on the predictor by moderator interaction. Any increment in R^2 resulting from the last step in the analyses is evidence of the moderator effect. These increments in R^2, the F values, and the probability levels for each of the predictor variables have been presented in Table 2.

As can be seen in Table 2, taking the moderating effects of Other-directedness into consideration added significantly to the predictive ability of the Mothers' Ho and Mothers' Ho subset factors only in the case of Mothers' Cynicism with the data for all the participants combined. In this case an additional 3% (F = 4.19, p < .05) of the variance in SE was associated with

Mothers' Cynicism once we considered the college-age participants' sensitivity to the behavioral and emotional cues emitted by others. However, for the Fathers' Ho and Ho subset factors, considering the moderating effects of Other-directedness greatly enhanced our ability to predict SE, especially for the sons' data. After the proportion of young men's SE variance associated with the predictor variable and with the Other-directedness variable were partialled out, the predictor x Other-directedness interaction significantly augmented R^2 for Fathers' Ho (12.3%, $F = 8.12$, $p < .01$), Fathers' Cynicism (13.7%, $F = 8.97$, $p < .01$), Fathers' Hostile Affect (12.6%, $F = 8.05$, $p < .01$), and Fathers' Aggressive Responding (6.8%, $F = 4.09$, $p < .05$). Similar analyses for young women's SE revealed that the moderating effects of Other-directedness were significant only for Fathers' Hostile Attributions, increasing R^2 by 7% ($F = 5.45$, $p < .025$). Finally these moderated regression analyses for all participants combined revealed that knolwedge of Other-deirectedness augmented R^2 for the following Fathers' Ho variables: overall Ho (7.4%, $F = 10.56$, $p < .005$), Fathers' Cynicism (6.9%, $F = 9.76$, $p < .005$), and Fathers' Hostile Attributions (7.4%, $F = 10.25$, $p < .005$).

Discussion

Previous studies have provided little by way of empirical evidence that specific parental cognitive constructs are related to adolescent emotional-psychological development. The present findings, however, suggest that Ho may be just such a cognitive construct. As indicated by the bivariate correlations in Table 1, Mothers' Cynicism, Mothers' Hostile Affect, and Mothers' Aggressive Responding were each significantly related to their

adolescent sons' SE (although none of the Mothers' Ho variables were related to their daughters' SE). For the Fathers' Ho data, Cynicism was inversely related to daughters' SE (whereas none of the Fathers' Ho factors were predictive of sons' SE).

A better understanding of these findings may emerge by taking a closer look at Barefoot et al.'s (1989) Ho subset factors. The Cynicism factor is measured by items such as the following: "I think a great many people exaggerate their misfortunes in order to gain sympathy and help of others" and "Most people make friends because friends will be useful to them." As stated by Barefoot et al., "Cynicism items reflect a generally negative view of humankind, depicting others as unworthy, deceitful, and selfish" (p. 48). The present findings suggest that when parents have this view of others as unworthy and unreliable, their adolescent sons (especially for Mothers' Cynicism) and daughters (especially for Fathers' Cynicism) come to believe that this is true not just of others in general, but also of them in particular. Such "reflected appraisals" (Rosenberg, 1979) of dissafaction are strongly predictive of lower levels of SE (e.g., Buri, Kirchner, & Walsh, 1988; Coopersmith, 1967; Gecas, 1971; Rohner, 1986; Rosenberg, 1965, 1979). Similarly, items from the Hostile Affect subset factor imply disaffection and disappointment toward others. Sample Hostile Affect items are: "Some of my family have habits that bother and annoy me very much" and "People often disappoint me."

Unlike the Cynicism and Hostile Affect subset factors, neither of which seem to suggest specific hostile behaviors that may proceed from these cognitions, the Aggressive Responding factor is associated with the use of

anger and aggression in interpersonal contexts. For example, the following items are from the Aggressive Responding factor: "I am often inclined to go out of my way to win a point with someone that has opposed me," "I strongly defend my own opinions as a rule," and "I have at times had to be rough with people who were rude or annoying." In the present study, agreement with such items by mothers was predictive of lower SE in their adolescent sons. Thus the present findings support previous reports of deleterious effects of parental aggressiveness (e.g., Becker, 1964; Maccoby, 1980; Patterson, 1982; Steinmetz, 1979), but they also suggest that the Aggressive Responding subset factor of Ho may be a cognitive antecedent in conflictual family situations (especially between mothers and sons). As several researchers have reported (e.g., Patterson & Bank, 1989; Patterson & Capaldi, 1991; Patterson, Dishion, & Bank, 1984; Patterson & Reid, 1984; Powers, Hauser, Schwartz, Noam, & Jacobson, 1983), when family environments exist in which irritable or challenging interpersonal communications are likely to be followed by angry or aggressive responses by other family members, extended episodes of hostility are apt to emerge and familial environments of warmth, mutual understanding, and support that are important for emotional-psychological development are apt to be missing. A potential avenue for future research is the investigation of Ho as an influential cognitive variable in such conflictual families.

Likely of greater import in the present study, however, are the moderating effects of adolescents' Other-directedness upon the relationship of parental Ho to adolescent SE. As was reported in Table 2, once the effects of each Ho factor and the Other-directedness factor upon SE had

been partialled out, the Ho factor x Other-directedness interaction still accounted for a significant proportion of SE variance for several of the Fathers' Ho factors. For example, with sons' SE, the Fathers' Cynicism x Other-directedness interaction still augmented R^2 by 13.7% (F = 8.97, $p < .01$) after the relation of Fathers' Cynicism and Other-directedness to SE had already been partialled out of the SE variance. Similarly, additional SE variance for sons was accounted for by the Fathers' Hostile Affect x Other-directedness interaction ($R^2\Delta$ = 12.6%) and by the Fathers' Aggressive Responding x Other-directedness interaction ($R^2\Delta$ = 6.8%). For daughters' SE, the Fathers' Hostile Attributions x Other-directedness interaction similarly augmented R^2 ($R^2\Delta$ = 7.0%). These findings clearly suggest that Other-directedness may be a cognitive construct with important consequences for the interpretation of parents' behaviors and emotions by adolescents.

Ever since James (1890) introduced the concept of the "social self" and shortly thereafter Cooley (1902) proposed the "looking glass self," many social psychologists have come to view interactions with others as prominent in the process of apprehending and assuming specific characteristics about one's self. Central to this symbolic interactionist position is the contention that one's self-concept is primarily affected by social interactions to the extent and in the way that one perceives those interactions. In other words, our "imputed sentiments" (Cooley, 1902) of others' appraisals of us are more consequential to our self-concepts than are their actual appraisals of us. The present findings suggest that this symbolic interactionist conception of the social "looking glass" as a

primary agent in the derivation of the self may actually be more accurate for some individuals than for others. Clearly the relation of the Fathers' Ho factors to adolescent SE was much stronger for those adolescents high in Other-directedness than for those low in Other-directedness. Because of their heightened sensitivity to behavioral and emotional cues emitted by those around them, those high in Other-directedness may actually make greater use of these "reflected appraisals" as they formulate their self-concepts. Those low in Other-directedness, on the other hand, may depend more upon their inner dispositions, values, and sentiments as they apprehend the self.

These comments are not meant to imply that those high in Other-directedness are necessarily more accurate than those low in Other-directedness in their evaluations of others' appraisals of them, but simply that they are more apt to rely upon this deduced information as they clarify their self-concepts. While the present findings clearly support the interactionist model for the development of SE, they also suggest that this model may not be universally applicable. More specifically, Other-directedness may be an important cognitive variable that moderates the explanatory veracity of symbolic interactionism.

Furthermore the present findings suggest that Other-directedness may serve to moderate the effects of negative home environments upon adolescent emotional-psychological development. Consistent with hypothesized effects of Other-directedness, the Fathers' Ho factors in the present study were much more strongly related to SE for those adolescents who were high in Other-directedness than for those low in Other-directedness. Apparently

greater attention and sensitivity to hostile interpersonal cues within the family context by individuals high in Other-directedness heightened the deleterious effects of the familial hostility. These results suggest that Other-directedness may be an important cognitive construct in our understanding of "resilience" in adolescents. Some individuals (those low in Other-directedness) may be less attuned to negative emotional and behavioral patterns in the family, thus cognitively "insulating" them against the debilitating consequences of such environments; other individuals (those high in Other-directedness), on the other hand, may be especially sensitive to the deleterious circumstances within the family, thus resulting in greater emotional and psychological vulnerability for these individuals. As stated by Kagan (1984), "the child's personal interpretation of experience, not the event recorded by camera or observer, is the essential basis for the formation of and change in beliefs, wishes, and actions" (p. 241); and the present findings suggest that Other-directedness may be a significant variable in our understanding of these subjective interpretations of experiences.

One apparently curious finding in the present study was that Other-directedness was predictive of moderator effects for several Fathers' Ho factors but for only one of the Mothers' Ho factors. In fact, however, these results are consistent with previous research which has suggested that the Ho construct manifests itself differently for men than for women. Smith et al. (1990) reported that within a marriage context, Ho was more predictive of overt indices of hostility for men than for women. They found that when placed in a high-conflict situation with their wives, high

Ho men experienced greater anger and overt hostile behavior then did low Ho men; furthermore, the high Ho men were more apt to blame their wives for their disagreements. High Ho wives in the same high-conflict situation, however, were not found to differ from low Ho wives in anger or blame, and there was only a small (albeit significant) increase in hostile behavior for these high Ho women. Thus the psychological disposition of Ho appears to affect the overt behavioral and emotional expressions of men more than those of women. One might therefore logically expect that the moderator effects of Other-directedness (which is purported to measure one's sensitivity to overt cues emitted by others) would be stronger when Ho characteristics are manifested more overtly (for the Fathers' Ho factors) than when they are less overtly expressed (for the Mothers' Ho factors); and it is just such an expectation that the present findings support.

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